

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 03850 311120Z

17 15
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

SSC-01 DRC-01 /113 W
----- 123256

P R 310955Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 928
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR SW
SUBJECT: SWEDISH FOREIGN MINSTER RESIGNS

REF: STOCKHOLM 3780

1. AT SPECIAL KING-IN-COUNCIL MEETING OCT 30 GOVERNMENT
ACCEPTED RESIGNATION OF FORNMINISTER WICKMAN AND DIRECTED
PRIMIN PALME TO HOLD PORTFOLIO AS TEMPORARY FORNMINISTER.
IN TWO TO THREE WEEKS PALME IS EXPECTED TO NAME NEW
FORNMINISTER AS PART OF A POSSIBLYWIDE-RANGING CABINET
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RESHUFFLE.

2. WICKMAN WILL BE ELECTED TO BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF RIKSBANK (CENTRAL BANK) OCT 31--A NECESSARY STEP TO HIS ELECTION AS HEAD OF RIKSBANK VICE PER ASBRINK, WHO HAS RESIGNED. WELL-INFORMED NEWSPAPER DAGENS NYHETER PROFESSES TO KNOW THAT SVEN ANDERSSON NOW DEFENSE MINSTER, WILL SUCCEED WICKMAN AT FOREIGN MINISTRY. WACHTMEISTER, DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TOLD CHARGE OCT 30 HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER PALME HAD SETTLED ON A SUCCESSOR BUT THOUGHT ANDERSSON WAS "LIKELY CHOICE."

3. IN POST-RESIGNATION INTERVIEW WICKMAN SAID THAT HE WAS VERY PLEASED TO GET THE BANK JOB WHICH HE HAD BEEN HOPING TO GET FOR A LONG TIME, AND HE SEEMED GENUINELY PLEASED TO GET RID OF THE ONEROUS WORKING SCHEDULE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. HE SAID THAT GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT OF HIS TENURE WAS WORKING OUT RELATIONS WITH EC, AND GREATEST SATISFACTION WAS ENDING OF COLD WAR. ON US-SWEDISH RELATIONS HE SAID ONE SHOULDN'T OVERDRAMATIZE THINGS AND THAT IN GENERAL RELATIONS ARE GOOD. IT IS ABSURD, HE SAID, THAT WE DON'T HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

COMMENT: FORNMINSTRY PEOPLE HEAVED MIGHTY SIGN OF RELIEF AT WICKMAN RESIGNATION. NEVER A DOMINATING FIGURE IN THE MINISTRY, WICKMAN HAS BEEN A KNOWN SHORT-TIMER FOR PAST SIX MONTHS AND HAS EXERCISED PROGRESSIVELY LESS CONTROL OF MINISTRY AS TIME PASSED. INSIDERS SAY THAT IN LEADERSHIP VACUUM MINISTRY DIVIDED INTO TWO CAMPS--ONE HEADED BY STATE SECRETARY SVERKER ASTROM AND OTHER LED BY KAI BJORK, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC POLITICIAN WHO IS MEMBER OF RIKSDAG AND AT SAME TIME COUNSELOR (NO. 3 MAN) IN FORNMINSTRY. CONSEQUENCE HAS OFTEN BEEN INABILITY OF MINISTRY TO CONTROL POLICY. MOST NOTABLE EXAMPLE, ACCORDING TO CONFIDENTIAL MINISTRY SOURCE, IS GOS RESPONSE TO CHILE COUP. SOURCE SAID THAT AMBASSADOR EDELSTAM, A WILLFUL PERSONALITY, HAS MADE SWEDISH POLICY IN CHILE WITHOUT REFERENCE TO STOCKHOLM. DECISIONS TO GRANT ASYLUM TO ALLENDE PARTISANS AND TO REPRESENT CUBAN INTERESTS IN SANTIAGO, FOR EXAMPLE, WERE EDELSTAM FAITS ACCOMPLIS. MINISTRY SOURCE SAID THIS AND OTHER LESS SPECTACULAR EXAMPLES OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"ANARCHY" SERIOUSLY DAMAGED MORALE OF MINISTRY PROFESSIONALS IN RECENT MONTHS. SOURCE SAID "EVERYONE" HOPES FOR A STRONG PERSONALITY AS NEW MINSTER AND SAID ANDERSSON, A PRESTIGIOUS SENIOR MEMBER OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ESTABLISHMENT, WOULD FILL THE BILL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERS (DIPLOMATS), PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: martinml
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STOCKH03850
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STOCKHOLM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973101/aaaaaaaiy.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STOCKHOLM 3780
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinml
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Sep-2001 by freemaal>; APPROVED <13-Sep-2001 by martinml>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SWEDISH FOREIGN MINSTER RESIGNS
TAGS: PFOR, SW
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005